

Rape in Papua New Guinea: Patterns, problems and consequences

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Abstract

This cross-sectional survey was done using content analysis of the two national daily newspapers in Papua New Guinea (PNG) – the *Post Courier* and *The National* – on news stories about rape over a three year period, 2004, 2005 and 2006. The objectives were to establish the patterns of rape against women in PNG, the problems associated with it and death, pregnancy and grievous bodily harm consequences of rape as reported by the two newspapers.

Key words: rape, gang rape, opportunistic rape, abduction rape, incestuous rape, marital rape, rape during criminal activity, rape as an act of revenge, rape as a weapon of war

Introduction

For this article, we define rape ‘as the penetration of the mouth, vagina or anus by any part of the attacker’s body or by an object used by the attacker, without the consent of the victim’.¹ In PNG, the two national daily newspapers – *The National* and the *Post Courier* – almost on a daily basis, provide a rich source of data on rape that form part of the evidence base for the prevalence and pervasiveness of rape as a social problem. Often quoting police records and other sources, and going by the level of coverage compared to other crimes, the two newspapers provide worrisome evidence that rape is a serious social issue in the country. To get a clearer picture of the seriousness of the problem, we look at police rape records as reported by the two newspapers for the period under review.

For 2004, according to police records, there were ‘324 reported murders and 563 serious sexual offences committed in the country in the first seven months of the year’.²

For 2005, the national statistics as released by the police showed that ‘there were 856 rape cases reported as against 998 in 2004. Port Moresby still had the highest number of rape cases at 173 - against 220 in 2004. Western Highlands Province (WHP) had the second highest number of rape cases at 120’.³

¹ Patricia Weiser Easteal, 1992, *Violence Prevention Today No. 1 Rape*, Australian Institute of Criminology, (<http://www.aic.gov.au>).

² Clifford Fairparik, 2004, ‘Startling murder, sex crimes data’, *Post Courier*, 3 September, p.1.

³ Clifford Fairparik, 2005, ‘Number of rape cases falls, say police’, *The National*, 28 December, p.3.

In another 2005 report, according to the police,

The number of murder and rape cases has more than tripled in the first nine months compared to the same period in 2004. A total of 436 murder cases were reported to the police last year, 305 more than the previous period. Rape cases also jumped from 213 to 641. Most of them were committed in Port Moresby and the Western Highlands Province. Port Moresby reported 110 murder cases compared to 37 last year and 144 rapes, compared to 33 last year. Western Highlands Province reported 54 murder cases as against 18 last year and 93 rapes as against 53 last year.⁴

The National, quoting the police, reported that in Port Moresby alone in January 2005:

There were 10 murders, 11 rapes, 16 other sexual offenses...and in March, police were in the process of investigating...16 rape cases, 25 other sexual offences... Comparing the number of rape cases in the three-month period, the worst was in February when there were 19 reported rape cases.⁵

Still in Port Moresby, another report has it that:

Serious sexual offences, including rape, averaged 36 cases per month for the last 3 months compared to 19 cases per month in 2004. This is a case per day of serious sexual crimes committed in Port Moresby over the last three months.⁶

Other provinces also feature in the rape reports. For instance in Lae city, the police chief, Simon Kauba said that:

Countless cases remained unreported. Most victims are under-aged girls who were left in the custody of male relatives. In rural areas, the community did not report the cases as they were often settled through compensation payments. The rape statistics for Lae showed: 11 reported rape cases in June and 10 reported cases in July 2005;⁷ and '9 rape and carnal knowledge cases in February'.⁸

Besides other serious crimes, police in Lae recorded '132 rapes' for 2005.⁹ As an indication of the seriousness of the problem of rape in Lae, it was reported that:

Since the Women and Children's Support Centre (Angau Memorial Hospital, Lae) opened in 2003, a total of 1000 patients have attended. Of those, 639 were family violence cases and 358 were sexual assault

⁴ Clifford Fairparik and Bonney Bonsela, 2005, 'Alarming crime – Murder and rape numbers triple in first nine months, say police', *The National*, 21-23 October, p. 1.

⁵ Clifford Fairparik, 2005, 'Murder, sexual offences, car thefts on the rise', *The National*, 20 April, p. 3.

⁶ Staff Reporters, 2005, 'POM going through bad crime wave', *The National*, 20 April, p. 3.

⁷ Peter Miva, 2005, 'Parents told to be security conscious', *The National*, 11 August, p. 22.

⁸ Rosalyn Albariel, 2005, 'Lae crime up, says top cop', *Post Courier*, 2 March, p. 1.

⁹ *The National* 9 October, 2006, 'Study: Lae Crime rate high', p.3.

victims¹⁰; which supports another claim 'that '98% of patients counselled at the Women and Child Support Centre are sexual assault victims'.¹¹

In another report, 'a total of 132 rape cases were reported in Kainantu during the past six months – January to June, 2005. 40 of the victims were children below the age of 10; 59 were 19 years or younger; while 33 were above 20',¹² which confirms the report that 'rape has become a daily occurrence in Kainantu, where young girls and women are abducted and raped even in broad day light'.¹³

Even the school environment is not safe as it was reported that at the University of Technology, Lae, 'at least 5 cases of rape and attempted rape had occurred within the campus since the academic year started in early March. Female students are living in fear, especially with reports that a group of men had threatened to rape girls at will'.¹⁴

The idea of a 'group of men' openly threatening to rape girls at random is not only evil but also difficult to understand.

In East New Britain Province, 'police statistics showed that in the past 12 months, 50 cases of rape and carnal knowledge and 27 other sexual offences were reported. Of the 77 rape cases, there have been 52 arrests and 19 follow-up arrests'¹⁵ and in Eastern Highlands, '16 rape cases were reported in July and 7 in June of 2005'.¹⁶

For 2006, according to *The National*:

Police statistics showed that 706 rape cases were reported in 2006 compared to 856 in 2005; 998 in 2004 and 1152 in 2003...Eastern Highlands Province and Morobe replaced Port Moresby and joined Western Highlands Province as places with the highest instances of rape...Western Highlands Province has reported 111 cases, while Morobe and Eastern Highlands Province both have reported 104 cases each this year. In 2005, Port Moresby reported 173 while Western Highlands Province reported 120. This year, Port Moresby reported 87 cases. North Fly area in the Western Province has reported no case this year making it the lowest reported area.¹⁷

¹⁰ Nancy Kalimda, 2005, 'PNG men 'violent'', *Post Courier*, 13 April, p. 4.

¹¹ *The National*, 22 November, 2005, 'Centre records rise in sexual assault victims', p. 8.

¹² Zachery Per, 2005, 'Rape cases in Kainantu on the rise: Nurse', *The National* 13 July, p.3.

¹³ Zachery Per, 2005, 'Women in black plead for peace', *The National*, 12 July, p. 2.

¹⁴ *Post Courier*, 14 April, 2005, 'Campus security concern', p. 4.

¹⁵ *Post Courier* 15 March, 2005, 'Sexual offences top crime list', p. 4.

¹⁶ *Post Courier*, 27 July, 2005, 'Rise in rape cases', p. 4.

¹⁷ Clifford Faiparik, 2006, 'Murders down in 2006: Police', *The National*, 28 December, p.2.

In the Autonomous region of Bougainville 'out of 54 cases, 32 of them are sexual violence against women and very young girls';¹⁸ while in East New Britain Province, 'a total of 66 sexual cases for the period between January and May 2006 were reported'.¹⁹

In the same vein, 'the New Ireland Police commander, Superintendent Tokanini Aquila...said that since the beginning of 2006, there had been more than 15 reported cases of rape and sexual abuse'.²⁰ In another Lae report, 'there were 13 rape cases in September compared to 6 cases in August; 13 in June and 26 cases for July this year – 2006'.²¹

All the statistics above, coming as they are from the police, who acknowledge that there are more cases that are not being reported, give us a serious indication that rape is an every day existential problem in PNG. Even the disabled are not spared the scourge as according to Sr. Wakom of the Women and Children's Support Centre (Angau Memorial Hospital) Lae:

The number of women with disabilities being sexually abused is increasing in Morobe Province. Sr Wakom said from January to July this year (2006), she received 16 cases of rape and out of these, 7 were women with disabilities and retarded children. She said out of the 7, two of those women have fallen pregnant.²²

However, available records show that so far, no attempt has been made to map the pattern, study the problems and associated consequences using the information as reported by the newspapers. That is the interest of this paper.

Methodology

Our main sources of data are the two national daily newspapers, the *Post Courier* and *The National*, which almost on a daily basis carry news stories about rape. To be able to get a sizeable sample size, the two daily newspapers were searched extensively for news stories on rape over a three year period – 2004, 2005, 2006. This was done to enable us get a large sample size to study the patterns, problems and other related factors. The decision to use the daily newspapers as a primary source of data was based on the fact that rape is a very sensitive issue which carries a lot of social stigma. Thus, it will be difficult to get a sizeable number of actual rape victims who will be willing and open enough to tell their stories and interviewing only a handful wouldn't give us the broad range of data for a meaningful analysis. As most of the news stories on rape as carried by the two newspapers were from police records, the authenticity and accuracy of the stories are assured. The newspapers were

¹⁸ *Post Courier*, 25 July, 2006, 'Sexual violence increasing', p.6.

¹⁹ Elizabeth Vuvu, 2006, 'Sexual crimes increasing', *Post Courier*, 26 May, p. 8.

²⁰ Elizabeth Vuvu, 2006, 'Rise in sexual abuse cases worries top cop', *Post Courier*, 12 September, p. 4.

²¹ *The National*, 10 October, 2006 'Serious crimes on the rise', p. 9.

²² *Post Courier*, 27 July, 2006, 'Sexual abuse rife in Morobe', p.4.

sourced from the journal section of the Friendship Library of Divine Word University.

Data analysis

The news stories on rape in the two daily newspapers were recorded as given in an Excel sheet under different headings, namely: type of rape, number of rapists involved, province of rape, place of rape, time of rape, type of weapon used, and consequences of the rape.

Results

Patterns

The aim here is to use the news stories to discover whether there is any recurring or noticeable pattern in the occurrence of rape. Under this section, we shall look at the types and frequency of rapes, number of rapists involved at any one time, province of rape, place of rape, and time of rape.

Types and frequency of rape

To help us understand the different types of rape, a definition of terms is necessary.

- *Gang rape*: This is when a group of rapists take part in the rape of a single victim.
- *Opportunistic rape*: This is when the rapist - known or unknown to the victim - seizes any opportunity to rape the victim. In most of the cases, the rapist is known to the victim.
- *Abduction rape*: This is when the rapist abducts the victim, takes her to another place and then rapes her repeatedly over several hours or even days.
- *Incestuous rape*: We use this to mean when rape occurs between very close blood relations for example, father vs. daughter, grand father vs. grand daughter, brother vs. sister, uncle vs. niece, step father vs. step daughter.
- *Rape during criminal activity*: The occurrence of rape as an indirect result of a criminal activity.
- *Rape as an act of revenge*: Rape used as a weapon of revenge.
- *Rape as a weapon of war*: Rape used as a weapon against women of warring tribes.
- *Marital rape*: Any unwanted sexual acts by a spouse or ex-spouse, committed without consent and/or against a person's will, obtained by force, or threat of force, intimidation, or when a person is unable to consent.

It is important to note that since there is no internationally acceptable way to classify rapists, our classifications may differ somewhat from other studies.

Nonetheless they are accurate and representative of the different types in our own local situation.

Thus, here we tally the frequency of occurrence of each type of rape. The aim is to find out whether a particular type occurs more frequently than others.

Table 1a: Types of rape reported in the *Post Courier* 2004-2006

<i>Post Courier</i>							
Year	Gang rape	Incestuous rape	Opportunistic rape	Abduction rape	Rape during criminal activity	Rape as a weapon of war	Total
2004	15	15	18	16	2	0	66
2005	18	18	28	10	0	0	74
2006	40	35	43	13	3	3	137
Total	73	68	89	39	5	3	277

Table 1b: Types of rape reported in *The National* 2004-2006

<i>The National</i>								
Year	Gang rape	Incestuous rape	Opportunistic rape	Abduction rape	Rape during criminal activity	Rape as an act of revenge	Marital rape	Total
2004	13	5	23	9	0	10	0	60
2005	24	15	21	16	1	0	1	78
2006	39	26	47	5	1	0	0	118
Total	76	46	91	30	2	10	1	256

Table 1c: Summary and ranking of types of rape reported in PNG national newspapers 2004-2006

Summary and ranking				
Type of Rape	<i>Post Courier</i>	<i>The National</i>	Total	Rank
Opportunistic rape	89	91	180	1 st
Gang rape	73	76	149	2 nd
Incestuous rape	68	46	114	3 rd
Abduction rape	39	30	69	4 th
Rape as a form of revenge	0	10	10	5 th
Rape during criminal activity	5	2	7	6 th
Rape as a weapon of war	3	0	3	7 th
Marital rape	0	0	1	8 th
Total	277	256	533	

Analysis: For the period under review, the *Post Courier* reported a total of 277 rape stories and *The National* reported 256, giving a combined total of 533 different types of rapes. This number however is far less than the reported police records as given above, which showed 998 for 2004, 856 for 2005 and

706 for 2006. For the frequency of occurrence, the figures show that opportunistic rapes, gang rapes and incestuous rapes are the most prevalent.

Though the statistics above demonstrate a serious national problem, however, the circumstances that surround the rapes, which can range from the incomprehensible where wives help their husbands to rape; to the bizarre where men rape their daughters in front of their wives and grandfathers rape their granddaughters with others and the downright horrific where the level of associated violence is inexplicable, tell us more.

For example, according to the *Post Courier*:

A woman was raped...by a man with help from his wife...The couple were at a garden when the young woman passed by. They lured her into their garden where the wife of the man helped to hold the woman down while her husband raped the woman.²³

Again the *Post Courier* reported that:

The court heard that Buka (the rapist) raped a widow – a mother of five – in his home. She had gone to the Buka family home with her children to spend some time. On the third night, Buka came out to the living room where the victim was asleep with her son, grabbed her and dragged her into the room. He threw her down on the bed beside his wife and raped her. The court heard that Buka refused to listen to her pleas to stop and instead ordered his wife to bring the lamp closer to the bed so they could see what they were doing.²⁴

There are also bizarre reports of men who rape their daughters in front of their wives. For example,

A...has been jailed for 17 years for having sex with his 15 year old daughter who is now pregnant by her father...The victim said in her statement that one night, her father knocked on the girls' room door. The mother was praying and did not want to wake up the children, so she opened the door and continued her prayer. The court heard that the father lowered the lamp light, walked to his daughter and threatened her with a pocket knife. He had sexual intercourse with his daughter in front of his wife. The mother tried to scream but her husband threatened to kill her if she did.²⁵

In another report:

Police have arrested three men allegedly involved in the rape of a 12 year old girl...Acting Morobe provincial police commander, Joseph Noah said the girl was allegedly raped at her home by two uncles and grandfather.²⁶

²³ *The Post Courier*, 30 November, 2006, 'Wife aids husband in rape', p. 9.

²⁴ Abby Yadi, 2004, 'Rapist freed – Prosecutor: 'sentence a mockery of justice', *Post Courier*, 1 March, p. 1.

²⁵ Jessie Lapou, 2004, 'Cleric jailed for incest', *Post Courier*, 8 March, p. 3.

²⁶ Sampson Bonai, 2006, 'Relatives rape girl in Bukawa', *The National*, 27 June, p. 10.

All the reports above which are not isolated cases are rather emblematic of the pervasiveness of rape in PNG. In one instance, 'a 7 months pregnant woman was raped in the toilet of an office'.²⁷

Number of rapists involved

Our interest here is to find out the number of rapists involved per rape session. This will help us in determining which one is more prevalent – rape involving single rapists or ones involving multiple rapists – gang rape. The table below shows the frequency and the distribution over the period as reported by the two newspapers.

Table 2: Statistics on single or multiple rapists' reports in newspapers

Year	Total for the year	<i>Post Courier</i>		Total for the year	<i>The National</i>	
		Single rapist	Gang (multiple) rapists		Single rapist	Gang (multiple) rapists
2004	108	44	64	114	39	75
2005	124	46	78	246	74	170
2006	306	89	217	274	76	198
Total	538	179	359	368	189	443

Analysis: From the table, according to the *Post Courier*, out of a total of 538 rapists, 179 of them raped a given victim alone – single rapist, while 359 rapists raped a given victim as a group – gang rape. For *The National*, out of 368 rapists, 189 of them raped a given victim alone – single rapist, while 443 rapists raped a given victim as a group – gang rape. This indicates that gang rapes are more common than a victim being raped by a single rapist.

To get a clearer picture we shall look at the frequency of occurrence of not only the single rapist but also the various multiple rapes.

Tables 3a to 3q: Frequency distribution of rapes involving 1 to 54 rapists as reported in PNG national newspapers 2004-2006

3a. Rapes involving only one rapist

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	44	46	89	179
<i>The National</i>	39	74	76	189
Total				368

²⁷Elizabeth Vuvu, 2006, 'Seven-month pregnant mother raped in NIP', *Post Courier*, 20 June, p. 6.

3b. Rapes involving **2** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	6	4	9	19
<i>The National</i>	5	8	8	21
Total				40

3c. Rapes involving **3** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	4	3	9	16
<i>The National</i>	2	6	12	20
Total				36

3d. Rapes involving **4** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	2	1	6	9
<i>The National</i>	0	8	0	8
Total				17

3e. Rapes involving **5** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	1	4	5
<i>The National</i>	3	6	5	14
Total				19

3f. Rapes involving **6** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	2	1	3	6
<i>The National</i>	0	5	5	10
Total				16

3g. Rapes involving **7** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	1	0	1
<i>The National</i>	0	0	1	1
Total				2

3h. Rapes involving **8** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	1	1	2
<i>The National</i>	0	1	0	1
Total				3

3i. Rapes involving **9** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>The National</i>	0	1	0	1
Total				1

3j. Rapes involving **10** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	0	1	1
<i>The National</i>	0	1	1	2
Total				3

3k. Rapes involving **11** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	0	1	1
<i>The National</i>	0	0	0	0
Total				1

3l. Rapes involving **12** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>The National</i>	0	0	2	2
Total				2

3m. Rapes involving **14** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>The National</i>	0	1	1	2
Total				2

3n. Rapes involving **15** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>The National</i>	0	0	1	1
Total				1

3o. Rapes involving **20** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	1	1	1	3
<i>The National</i>	1	0	1	2
Total				5

3p. Rapes involving **24** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>The National</i>	1	0	0	1
Total				1

3q. Rapes involving **54** rapists

	2004	2005	2006	Total
<i>Post Courier</i>	0	0	1	1
<i>The National</i>	0	0	0	0
Total				1

Analysis: The tables above show that rapes involving more than one rapist – gang rapes – are more common than ones involving only one rapist. The idea of 54, 24 or 20 men, at any one time taking turns to rape a single girl, raises a lot of questions that might be difficult to answer. The only plausible explanation, but not an excuse, can be reduced to the problem of ‘group thinking’. PNG is a very traditional society where the individual as such does not exist socially; it is the group that exists. The individuals draw their identity from the group, without the group, the individual atrophies. As a sociological vehicle for protection and support, its advantages are enormous. However, its propensity as a tool for senseless crime can also be staggering. In this case, it simply takes one person to initiate the act and the others will follow. That perhaps explains why, for example, 20 men can easily ‘agree’ to rape one woman. In such a situation, even if one individual does not like what is happening, he cannot say no to the desire of the group. So, he participates as a matter of course.

Province where the rape occurred

The aim here is to find out where rapes occur more often. Combined with other factors, this will help us to know where women might be more at risk of being raped.

Table 4: Provincial distribution and ranking of rape reports 2004-2006

Province	<i>Post Courier</i> 2004	<i>Post Courier</i> 2005	<i>Post Courier</i> 2006	<i>The National</i> 2004	<i>The National</i> 2005	<i>The National</i> 2006	Total	Rank
Morobe	17	14	64	14	22	69	200	1 st
NCD	5	13	5	8	16	11	58	2 nd
ENB	8	9	12	5	4	4	43	3 rd
WHP	2	2	5	1	7	9	26	4 th
Madang	3	2	2	13	0	2	22	5 th
EHP	1	4	2	2	3	8	20	6 th
WNB	4	2	4	0	1	4	15	7 th
NIP	2	1	12	0	0	0	15	7 th
SHP	1	1	1	3	6	0	12	9 th
NSP	0	8	3	1	0	0	12	9 th
Milne B.	5	0	7	0	0	0	12	9 th
Western	2	4	1	0	4	0	11	12 th
Central	0	2	2	1	2	4	11	12 th
Simbu	2	1	0	5	1	1	10	14 th
Manus	1	2	3	0	2	0	8	15 th
ESP	3	1	1	1	0	0	6	16 th
Oro	4	0	1	0	0	0	5	17 th
Gulf	0	0	3	1	1	0	5	17 th
Enga	0	0	0	0	3	1	4	19 th
Sandaun	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	20 th

Analysis: From the table, Morobe province is ranked first, National Capital District (NCD) Port Moresby) second, and East New Britain Province (ENB), third. Even though not shown in the table above, East New Britain Province takes has the highest incidences of incestuous rapes, while Morobe Province has the highest incidences for opportunistic rapes. In Morobe, most of the rapes occurred in Lae settlements such as Kamkumung, Bumbu and Tent City.

The old airport in Lae seems to be the ‘gang-rape rendezvous’ to where rapists take their victims. The ranking of Lae as the ‘rape centre’ in PNG can be understood in the context of a bigger crime situation. In a study by James Laki on the perceptions of crime, it was discovered that:

raskols were perceived as a major problem, which is consistent with the hypothesis that there are fewer village-derived social controls in Lae than in other centres, where these controls lower victimization levels.²⁸

Place of Rape

Our interest here is to find out where women are more at risk of being raped.

Table 5: Frequency and ranking of 2004-2006 newspaper reports on places where rape occurred

Place of rape	<i>Post Courier</i> 2004	<i>Post Courier</i> 2005	<i>Post Courier</i> 2006	<i>The National</i> 2004	<i>The National</i> 2005	<i>The National</i> 2006	Total	Rank
Nearby bushes	17	25	60	16	32	40	190	1 st
Family house	11	11	31	4	15	29	101	2 nd
Settlement	8	1	39	8	6	12	74	3 rd
Rapist house	4	3	12	7	6	11	43	4 th
Victim house	3	5	7	5	9	9	38	5 th
Garden	0	4	8	0	1	7	20	6 th
Office	1	1	5	1		1	9	7 th
In PMV	1	1			2		4	8 th
Police cells		2			2		4	8 th
School dorm			1		1	2	4	8 th
Beside river			2			1	3	11 th
School premises					2		2	12 th
Police station					1	1	2	12 th
Inside market	1	0					1	14 th
Maternity labour room	1						1	14 th
Classroom	1						1	14 th
Murray			1				1	14 th

²⁸ Lt. Col. James Laki, 2006, ‘Perceptions of Crime in Lae’, *Post Courier*, 27 September, p. 12.

Barracks								
Inside a kai bar			1				1	14 th
Police Barracks					1		1	14 th
Clinic room					1		1	14 th
Guest house					1		1	14 th
Inside a taxi					1		1	14 th
Church grounds					1		1	14 th
Ela Beach					1		1	14 th
Security guard office						1	1	14 th

Analysis: What the table shows us is that rape in PNG can occur almost anywhere. However, its occurrence in certain places is very worrisome, for example, inside the police station and police station cells. These are supposed to be the places where one would expect women to be least at risk of being raped. Unfortunately, the reverse seems to be the case. In one incident, a female remandee was raped first by the duty police man and later by another detainee, a convicted rapist, in the same police cell.²⁹

In another disturbing case: A pregnant woman was allegedly raped by a trainee health worker while he was assisting her to deliver her first baby.³⁰ The occurrences of rapes in Public Motor Vehicles (PMVs) are especially problematic. In one instance, four men raped a girl inside a PMV around 2.30pm while the driver and the crew watched through the rear mirror.³¹

Time of Rape

Here, the aim is to find out whether there is a 'preferred' time by rapists. By looking at the times when most rapes occur, we will be in a better position to understand the psyche of rapists and to consider possible rape prevention strategies.

Table 6: Frequency and ranking of 2004-2006 newspaper reports on day or night times when rape occurred

Place of rape	<i>Post Courier</i> 2004	<i>Post Courier</i> 2005	<i>Post Courier</i> 2006	<i>The National</i> 2004	<i>The National</i> 2005	<i>The National</i> 2006	Total	Rank
Day time 6am to 7pm	10	17	64	8	31	43	173	1 st
Night time 7pm to 6am	16	19	31	16	20	37	139	2 nd

²⁹ *Post Courier*, 27 July, 2005 'Woman raped in cell', p.3.

³⁰ Christina Kewa, 2004, 'Woman raped in childbirth: Trainee medico in sick attack – Mother-to-be raped on the delivery table', *Post Courier*, 4 July, p.1.

³¹ Bruce Maurice, 2004 'Young girl pack-raped on bus as driver, crew watched' (View Point), *Post Courier* 23 June, p 10.

Analysis: From the records, most rapes occur during the day, which unfortunately creates a far bigger problem for rape prevention. Ordinarily, from a common sense crime prevention perspective, the day is supposed to be safer, but in the case of rape, the day is worse than the night. However, it is important to point out that the differential between night and day is not much which leaves us to believe that rape in PNG occurs at any time. That being the case, coming out with adequate rape prevention strategies will be difficult.

Problems

Here, we look at the type of weapon used and the consequences of the rape.

Type of weapon used

Our interest here is to find out whether there is a preferred weapon of choice by rapists. Note, in PNG the machete is referred to as a 'bush knife'.

Table 7a: Post Courier reports on weapon used in a rape situation

<i>Post Courier</i>						
Year	Knife (pocket or bush)	Gun	Piece of iron	Axe or spear	Piece of timber	Screw driver
2004	11	1	3	0	0	0
2005	16	5	5	0	0	0
2006	46	9	0	1	1	1
Total	73	15	8	1	1	1

Table 7b: The National reports on weapon used in a rape situation

<i>The National</i>					
Year	Knife (pocket or bush)	Gun	Piece of iron	Cup	Stones
2004	12	2	0	0	0
2005	21	3	0	1	1
2006	43	18	1	0	0
Total	76	23	1	1	1

Analysis: For the type of weapon used, a total of 149 bush/pocket knives were reported to have been used. Without being told, we know already that the number is higher. In PNG, a bush/pocket knife is an inseparable companion. Everybody has a bush knife. As a tool for all kinds of things, the value is enormous. Unfortunately, its usage as a weapon of rape is very obvious. A total of 38 guns were reported to have been used.

Looking at the figures, it is obvious that there is a progressive increment over the years in the use of offensive weapons, guns and bush/pocket knives in rape. This situation caused the former Internal Security Minister, Bire Kimisopa to lament that 'using guns to rape a woman is one big concern for every one. We

cannot sit back to allow guns to freely circulate in our community'.³² As an indication of the proliferation of guns, it was reported that in Chimbu Province alone, 'of every 10 houses, 6 have guns'.³³ The presence of offensive weapons during rape can significantly lower the resistance threshold of victims because of the fear that it might be used against them.

Consequences of the rape

The consequences of rape are manifold, but our interest here is the consequences of rape in terms of death, pregnancy and grievous bodily harm. It is important to note that the consequences of rape go beyond the list we have as reported. Besides the physical and the psychological, there is no way a gang of at least 4 can repeatedly rape a girl without untold damage being done to the victim's physiology.

Table 8a: Number of *Post Courier* reports 2004-2006 of deaths, pregnancy or grievous bodily harm as a consequence of rape

<i>Post Courier</i>			
Year	Deaths	Pregnancy	Grievous bodily harm
2004	9	0	8
2005	3	2	4
2006	3	5	13
Total	15	7	25

Table 8b: Number of *The National* reports 2004-2006 of deaths, pregnancy or grievous bodily harm as a consequence of rape

<i>The National</i>			
Year	Deaths	Pregnancy	Grievous bodily harm
2004	3	0	2
2005	4	2	8
2006	10	6	12
Total	17	8	22

Table 8c: Total numbers of 2004-2006 newspaper reports of deaths, pregnancy or grievous bodily harm as a consequence of rape

<i>Post Courier and The National total</i>			
	Deaths	Pregnancy	Grievous bodily harm
Total	32	15	47

Analysis: From the table, for the period under review, a total of 32 victims lost their lives directly to rape; 15 victims got pregnant as a direct result of being

³² Clifford Fairparik, 2004, 'Use of guns in rape incidents on the rise', *The National*, 24 September, p. 5.

³³ *Post Courier*, 13 April, 2005, '60% of homes have a gun', p. 2.

raped and 47 victims suffered grievous bodily harm worthy of reporting. Of more concern to us however, is the degree of savagery and brutality accompanying the death or bodily harm. A few examples will illustrate what we mean.

Death of the victims

According to *The National*:

One week after a convicted rapist was freed on bail he raped the victim again and slit her throat. Yesterday, one day after killing the mother of two, Pahun William, in his 20s, committed suicide by cutting off his private parts – they were first cousins.³⁴

In another news item:

The single mother aged 40, left her house very early in the morning between 5.30am and 6.00am and went to her garden to collect pumpkin tips to sell in the market...when some criminals attacked, raped and killed her...More than 10 stab wounds were found in her neck, ear and shoulder.³⁵

In another story in the *Post Courier*:

The man raped a young woman and then used a pocket knife to slash her throat.³⁶

Associated deaths: There were also other deaths which were corollary to the rape incidents. For instance:

A man from Madang Province was brutally murdered in Mendi, Southern Highlands Province. Eyewitnesses said the man was an eyewitness to a rape incident where he watched as his sister was raped. They said the alleged suspects rounded him up just outside Mendi Town and stabbed him, then ripped off his skin from his face to hide his identity.³⁷

An ambush which resulted in the rape of two sisters and two brothers being consigned to certain death in a fast flowing river has resulted in a man being jailed for life...The gang stole their belongings, raped the girls, tied the hands of the boys and the girls behind them with barbed wire and threw them into the river.³⁸

The gang went looking for Francis but attacked, raped and killed his mother when they could not find him.³⁹

³⁴ Bonney Bonsela, 2005, 'Raped and killed-by same man...one week after his release', *The National*, 10 August, p. 1.

³⁵ *The National*, 28 October, 2005, 'Woman raped and stabbed to death in attack', p. 6.

³⁶ Brenda Peter, 2004, 'Serial Killer held', *Post Courier*, 9 September, p. 1.

³⁷ *Post Courier*, 2 September, 2004 'Rape witness murdered' (In brief), p. 4.

³⁸ Sheila Lasibori, 2006, 'Jailed for life', *Post Courier*, 11 December, p.1.

³⁹ Clifford Faiparik, 2006, 'Trio escape death, get life', *The National*, 22 May, p. 3.

All the cases above are not just isolated, but representative of the total rape situation which were reported.

Grievous bodily harm:

The 12-year-old was attacked by her father, who chased the mother away and raped the daughter. He then sharpened a piece of wood which he pushed into the girl's private parts, causing severe damage to her genitals.⁴⁰

The court heard that the man had followed his adopted daughter into her bedroom after she had taken a shower, threatened her and then raped her. The court also heard that he later cut off the nipple on her right breast and her belly bottom area to drain some blood which he later placed in a container with some ginger on the roof of the house to prevent her from getting pregnant.⁴¹

The disturbing thing here is that all the above cases which are no means isolated, involved incestuous rapes.

Pregnancy in rape victims

Almost all the pregnancies were as a result of incestuous rapes and involved under-aged girls. One of them aged 12 was raped by her stepfather who as a result was given 32 years in jail.⁴²

In a related report in East New Britain, between 1999 and 2004, there were 61 rape cases with 17 pregnancies involving those in the 11-15 year age groups; 40 rapes with 10 pregnancies involving those in the 16-18 year age groups and 34 rapes with 1 pregnancy involving 18 year-olds.⁴³

Some other reported consequences worthy of mention are:

One girl aged 26 who was gang raped having the possibility of contracting HIV/AIDS as one of the rapists is a known HIV/AIDS positive man.⁴⁴

A 19-year-old girl was pack-raped by a group of men. A police duty patrol truck picked up the girl after spotting her lying unconscious.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Rosalyn Albani, 2004, 'Sordid child abuse – More children abused than adult women raped', *Post Courier*, 20 – 22 August, p.1.

⁴¹ Rosalyn Albani, 2006, 'Man gets 15 years for rape', *Post Courier*, 27 April, p. 14.

⁴² Annette Sete, 2005, 'Step-father gets 32 years for sex abuse', *Post Courier*, 22 April, p. 4.

⁴³ Jessie Lapou, 2005, '141 rapes in 5 years', *Post Courier*, 17 June, p. 6.

⁴⁴ *Post Courier*, 20 June, 2005, 'Rapist has HIV', p. 3.

⁴⁵ Andrew Alphonse, 2005, 'Police caution women in SHP about moving around at night', *The National*, 19 January, p. 5.

An 11-year-old girl was dragged out of her house and raped...The girl was seriously injured and fell into a coma as she was taken to the hospital.⁴⁶

A young girl was saved from some men who were trying to rape her...Her relief however turned into a traumatic experience when her saviour raped her at his home. When his wife found out, instead of helping, she stabbed the girl.⁴⁷

A 14-year-old student was raped by 20 men...they were waylaid by 3 armed men (who) took her to a spot where they were joined by 17 others. The victim, who was left unconscious, had been ward at the Port Moresby General Hospital.⁴⁸

The consequences of rape as reported within the period are too numerous to mention. In a short article like this, we cannot cover in greater detail all the consequences of rape in PNG. Without doubt, rape is a serious social problem that affects many aspects of the lives of everyone in the society.

Conclusion

From this research, we have learned that rape, which is a world-wide problem of gender based violence, is also a big concern in PNG. This study helps us to understand the pattern, the problems and the associated consequences of rape in PNG. In terms of pattern of occurrence, the study shows that though opportunistic, gang and incestuous rapes are the most prevalent; the circumstances under which they occur are of great concern. It is also clear that gang rapes are more common than rapes involving a single rapist; that it happens everywhere, any time, and that both young and old females can be victims.. With regard to consequences, the research shows that rape in PNG is associated with many terrible consequences that include physical injury, pregnancy and in some cases, death.

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⁴⁶ James Apa Gumuno, 2005, '11-year-old girl in coma after violent rape', *The National*, 9 March, p. 4.

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⁴⁸ Agnes Peter, 2006, 'Son, 20, rapes mum', *The National*, 21 February, p.1.

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